

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4404

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 3240

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, IN, IZ

SUBJ: VISIT OF IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER

SUMMARY -- IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER HAMMADI REPORTEDLY DEVOTED MOST ATTENTION TO NON-ALIGNED QUESTIONS DURING MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHAVAN AND OTHER INDIAN OFFICIALS FEBRUARY 26. NEITHER THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE NOR DELHI SOURCES INDICATE THE TALKS PRODUCED SIGNIFICANT RESULTS. END SUMMARY.

1. DIRECTOR OF MEA WEST ASIAN DIVISION TOLD US MARCH 2 THAT THERE IS LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE IN IRAQI FOREIGN
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MINISTER HAMMADI'S VISIT TO DELHI FEBRUARY 25-26. HE

THOUGHT BAGHDAD ONLY WANTED TO KEEP ITSELF IN THE THICK OF NON-ALIGNED DEVELOPMENTS (EVEN HOPING TO QUALIFY AT SOME POINT AS HOST OF A NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT) AND THEREFORE SOUGHT THE ONE-DAY ROUND OF TALKS. THE MEA OFFICIAL SPECULATED THAT THE IRAQIS MIGHT ALSO BE CONCERNED, AS THEY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST, ABOUT INDIA'S DEALINGS WITH EGYPT AND YUGOSLAVIA ON NON-ALIGNED QUESTIONS TO THE APPARENT EXCLUSION OF THEMSELVES, THE "MAVERICKS" OF THE ARAB WORLD IN HIS WORDS. WHILE SAYING BILATERAL MATTERS WERE ALSO DISCUSSED, THE MEA OFFICIAL NOTED THAT A SERIOUS REVIEW OF ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL QUESTIONS (INCLUDING OIL) WILL AWAIT THE INDO-IRAQI JMWNT COMMISSION MEETING IN DELHI IN LATE MARCH OR APRIL. OIL MINISTER MALAVIYA WILL HEAD THE INDIAN DELEGATION.

2. AFTER HAMMADI'S NINETY MINUTE MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER VHAVAN FEBRUARY 26 HE TOLD THE PRESS THAT "OUR IDEAS WERE ALMOST SIMILAR ON MOST OF THE SUBJECTS WE DISCUSSED". AT A SUBSEQUENT COURTESY CALL ON THE PRESIDENT HE HANDED OVER A LETTER FROM THE IRAQI PRESIDENT (OUR MEA CONTACT COULD NOT TELL US WHAT THE LETTER CONCERNED BUT CYNICALLY COMMENTED IT MAY HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO ENSURE HAMMADI WAS IN FACT RECEIVED AT A HIGH-LEVEL). THE IRAQI ALSO PAID A COURTESY CALL ON THE P.M.

3. THE FEBRUARY 26 INDO-IRAQI COMMUNIQUE CONSISTS OF SIX BLAND PARAGRAPHS RESTATING FAMILIAR INDO-IRAQI POSITIONS. THE TWO SIDES CALL FOR AN INDIAN OCEAN "FREE FROM FOREIGN MILITARY BASES AND GREAT POWER RIVALRY AND TENSION", AND ASK "THE GREAT POWERS AND MAJOR MARITIME USERS TO FULLY COOPERATE WITH THE LITORAL AND HINTERLAND STATES IN ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVE." ACCORDING TO THE MEA SOURCE, THE IRAQIS REQUESTED IOZP LANGUAGE BUT DEFERRED TO THE INDIAN FORMULATION AFTER OFFERING ONE OF THEIR OWN IN TORTURED TRANSLATION FROM THE ARABIC; HE WAS NOT SURE HOW THE REFERENCE TO "HINTERLAND" STATES CREPT IN UNLESS IRAQ ASKED FOR IT AS A COUNTRY NOT DIRECTLY SITUATED ON THE INDIAN

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OCEAN. THE INDIANS IN TURN AGREED TO ACCEPT A STATEMENT INDICATING BOTH SIDES' "UNQUALIFIED SUPPORT FOR THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE ARAB PALESTINIAN PEOPLE" AND "THE RESTORATION OF THE FULL RIGHTS TO THE ARAB PEOPLE OF PALESTINE." THERE IS NO REFERENCE IN THE COMMUNIQUE TO ESTABLISHING A NON-ALIGNED GENERAL SECRETARIAT AT A PERMANENT NON-ALIGNED HEADQUARTERS OR THE NEED FOR AN EFFECTIVE INFORMATION ORGAN, IDEAS WHICH THE IRAQI

EMBASSY ENDORSED IN A PRESS RELEASE ON THE EVE OF HAMMADI'S VISIT. (THE INFORMATION MINISTER OF YUGOSLAVIA BERBEROVIC WOUND UP A THREE-DAY VISIT HERE MARCH 2 DURING WHICH THE QUESTION OF A NON-ALIGNED NEWS BUREAU WAS APPARENTLY DISCUSSED. ACCORDING TO THE INDIAN PRESS, IT WAS AGREED THAT NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES SHOULD BROADEN THE SCOPE OF RADIO, TELEVISION, AND PRESS COOPERATION, AND THERE WOULD BE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS OF SUCH COOPERATION AT A TUNIS SYMPOSIUM LATER THIS MONTH AND AT A MEETING HERE IN JULY.)

4. THE EGYPTIAN DCM TOLD US MARCH 3 THAT IN HIS VIEW DR HAMMADI VISITED DELHI AND OTHER SOUTH ASIAN CAPITALS BECAUSE IRAQ IS NOW SEEKING A ROLE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT WHICH IT FEELS IS COMMENSURATE WITH ITS NEW WEALTH. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT HAMMADI SPECIFICALLY TRIED TO PROMOTE THE IDEA OF A PERMANENT NON-ALIGNED SECRETARIAT, AN IDEA WHICH HE SAID HIS GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THAT OF INDIA AND YUGOSLAVIA OPPOSE.
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